

Doccupy Film Series

Occupy Hollywood

Wednesday, February 19th, 2014, 7-10pm
Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave. Venice



Producer: Rob Dew – robbiedew@yahoo.com

Panel: Gerry Fialka: Writer & Paramedia Ecologist - Laughtears.com, VeniceWake.org
Eric Magnuson: LMU Prof of Sociology, Author: Changing Men, Transforming Culture
Masha Lee Savitz: Educator, Filmmaker: RED REIGN, redreignfilm.com

Occupy Venice Announcements

Mondays Occupy Venice General Assembly, Beyond Baroque, 7:30pm
3rd Tuesdays Venice Neighborhood Council, Westminster elementary, 7:30-9pm
3rd Wednesday Media Discussion Group with Gerry, Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 7-10p
1st Tuesdays McLuhan – Finnegan's Wake Reading Club. MDRey Library, 6-8pm
4th Sundays 7 Dudley Cinema with Gerry, Beyond Baroque, 7-10pm
Thursday's Children Occupy the Garden, Venice Learning Garden, Call Eleu 424-298-0777
March 1 Great March for Climate Action, greatclimatemarchkickoff.eventbrite.com
March 19 Occupy Venice Film Series, Electric Lodge, Topic: Climate Change
April 4 Worldwide Wave of Action: 3 months of autonomous non-violent action

THANK YOU Jesse and Dean, Cinephile Video, 11280 Santa Monica Blvd
Hal's Bar, 1349 Abbot Kinney (*Our monthly After party is here*)
Joel Shapiro, Drea Stobke, Electric Lodge – "A 99 Seat Theater"
Sage, Rasta Lab, 254 Hampton Dr. Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd.

FOLLOW UP **Oscar Aftermath Discussion:** 3/5 at 9 Dudley Ave, Venice with Gerry Fialka

FACEBOOK Occupy Venice Beach Film Series, Occupy Venice Beach,

SCHEDULE

6:45-7:15 Dining, Mingling
7:15 **Intro, Announcements**
7:30 **Film 1: "Argo"**
Clip 1: Trailer
Clips 2-5: from film
7:40 Expert Panel, Audience Discussion
8:00 **Clip 6: "Operation Hollywood – How the Pentagon shapes opinion"**
8:05 **Film 2: "The Fifth Estate"**
Clip 7: Featurette
Clips 8-9: from film
Expert Panel, Audience Discussion
8:40 **Film 3: "Wolf of Wall Street"**
Clips 10-12: from film
9:00 Expert Panel, Audience Discussion
9:30 **Clip 13:** from the "Great Dictator" Charlie Chaplin final speech



~Sponsored by the Venice Neighborhood Council and Occupy Venice~

OVERVIEW:

Many would recoil at the thought of modern Hollywood cinema being used as a propagandist tool, but the facts seem to speak for themselves. There is long standing history of cooperation and compliance with various branches of government dating back to the earliest days of the industry. Democracies require narratives to rule. You simply must tell the masses who the good and bad guys are or they won't fight and die in wars. Movies are very useful for that. While some may enjoy these movies simply as entertainment, others, more impressionable, will be imbued with the images and ideas portrayed. A dramatic increase in military enlistment resulted after the release of Top Gun in 1984. Other films have continued this trend. The need for positive portrayals has only increased as Wikileaks, Snowden and other whistleblowers have exposed wrongdoing. The spy may have come in from the cold, but he continues to shelter in the shadows of the theater.

Major Findings in this Report

- Hollywood has a history of cooperation with government. Defense & CIA in particular
- Hollywood stories have a considerable affect on the populace who see them. Comprising a megaphone for American culture and when needed, a propaganda tool
- The corporate take over of major studio filmmaking has coincided with more product placement, watered down content for a mass audience and heavy marketing schemes over artistic license and depth of story.
- Revisionist history through filmmaking is changing the narrative, giving favorable portrayals to allies and negative portrayals to enemies. Increasingly that narrative is being changed not just by governments but elites with their own agendas
- America's favorite heroes are outlaws and mavericks. Men who break rules to succeed
- The awareness and understanding of art as propaganda is a great asset to free minds

Larger Questions

- Does art owe society any allegiance?
- Does the artist have a moral imperative to create socially conscious work?

Comcast, Time Warner Cable merger worries, outrages consumers ~detroitnews.com

Cable subscribers don't give Comcast and Time Warner Cable good grades when it comes to customer satisfaction. So after Comcast announced its \$45 billion purchase of Time Warner Cable Thursday 2/13, it didn't take long for consumers to start venting their frustrations over high prices, spotty service and fears of a monopoly. The merger gives the giant a 57% share of the national market. Higher prices and ending net neutrality threatened

Facts

723 – The number of film Schools In the USA.

12,903,300,000 - Total Domestic Box Office Gross in 2013

361,900 - Number of wage and salary jobs in the motion picture industries

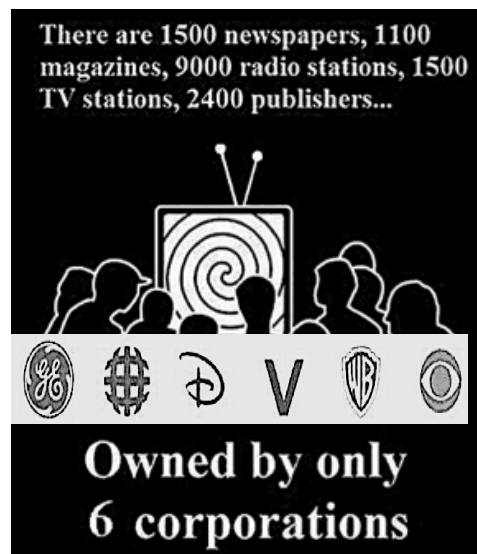
Women directed 7% of the top 250 grossing films in 2009

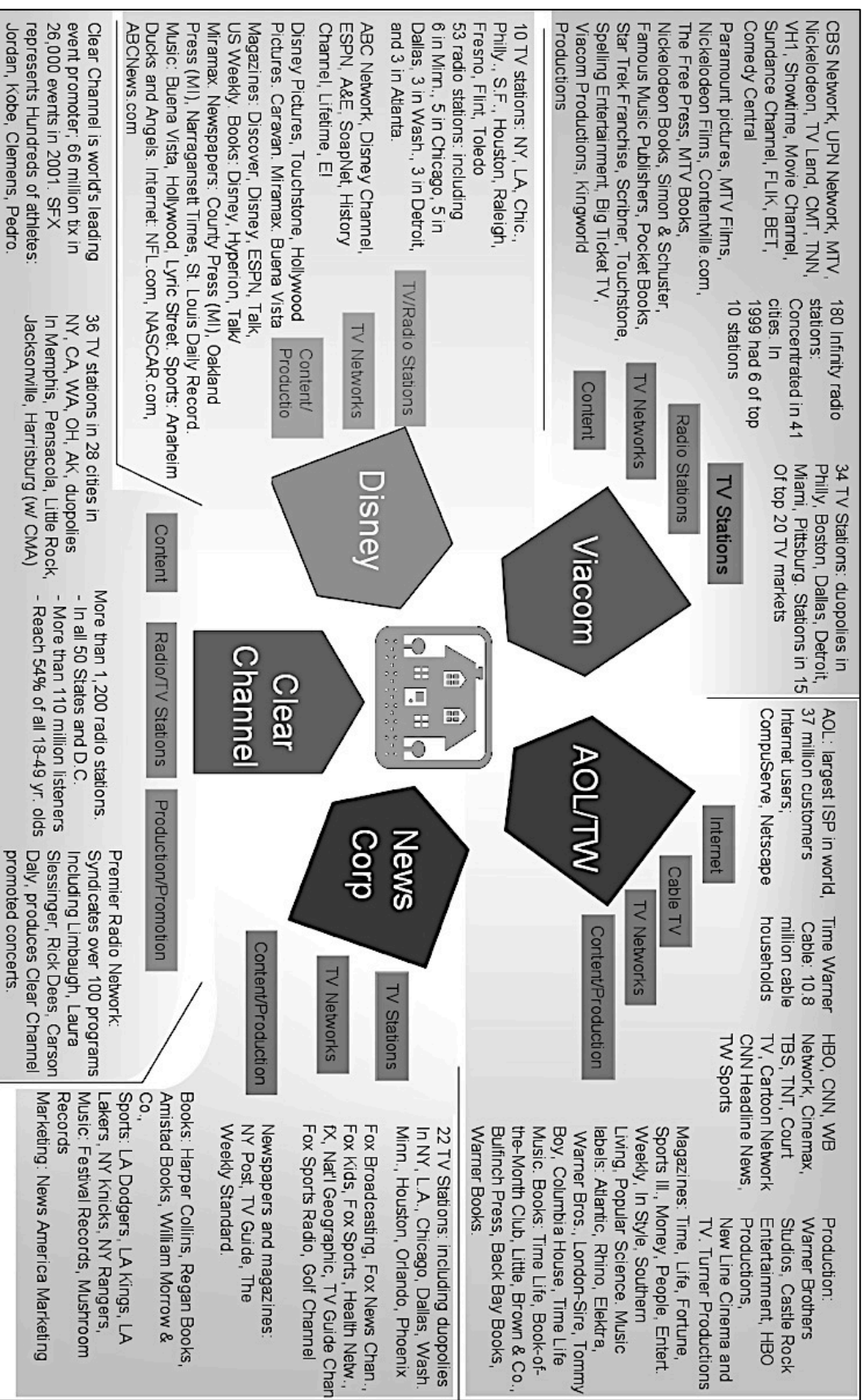
Gaming industry surpassed Hollywood in revenue in early 2000s

International box office has surpassed domestic, often doubling the revenue earned in US

6 Major Multinational Conglomerates own nearly all major US media: TV, Print, Film, Radio

EVERY MODERN STATE IS EXPECTED TO HAVE A MINISTRY OF PROPAGANDA, WHATEVER ITS ACTUAL NAME MAY BE ~JACQUE ELLUL





AMERICAN MEDIA CONSOLIDATION

Selected History of Hollywood

1917: Pres. Woodrow Wilson's Committee on Public Information (CPI) enlisted the aid of America's film industry to make training films and features supporting the 'war cause'.

1934: Hayes Production Code implemented to clean up the content in Hollywood films.

"No picture shall be produced that will lower the moral standards of those who see it... the audience's sympathies should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin."
"Law shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation."

It also prohibited: Sexual relationships between the white and black races

Ridicule of the clergy and depiction of sedition

Depicting any criminal escaping punishment or death

1941: WWII - Hollywood produced propaganda films, newsreels and docs for the war-effort. All war related films had to be approved by the Office of War Information.

1947: (HUAC) House Un-American Activities holds hearings on communists in Hollywood. It was mostly a smoke screen to flush out liberals during the red scare era and advanced the careers of co-chairman Richard Nixon and friendly witnesses Ronald Reagan

1947: Blacklisting in Hollywood begins - accused communist and liberals unable to work. Hollywood 10 given a year in prison for not complying with Congress. Blacklisting continues until mid fifties

1960s: Studio System collapses under competition from TV and is left looking for a new business model and financing.

1968: Hayes code is abandoned and MPA rating system adopted. The first film to receive an X rating under new MPA rules was the anti-establishment "Greetings"

1981: Ronald Reagan became the first movie-star President. His conservative reign and revival of the Cold War was reflected in Hollywood's many action-adventure films of the decade with aggressive, macho stars such as Sylvester Stallone and Clint Eastwood

1983: 20th Century Fox began to openly solicit deals to display brand names in its films

1986: "Top Gun" produced with unprecedented military cooperation and access - highlights a trend toward Dept. of Defense cooperation with favorable portrayals. Military recruitment dramatically increased following release. Producer Jerry Bruckheimer becomes CIA favorite

1990s: Multinational corporations buy up Hollywood studios making them a part of larger corporate entertainment division. Films become more of a vehicle for product placement and cross marketing of corporate assets such as music and consumer goods

1996: Telecommunications Act of 1996 deregulates the communications industry leading to massive mergers and acquisition till just 6 major companies own nearly all media

2000s: Emphasis on opening weekend results has forced studios to fast track success.

Godfather took 6 weeks to catch on - today films are evaluated by weekend returns

2010s: International box office has replaced domestic box office in primacy resulting in films watered down content geared to an international audience. Large actions films and animation dominate at the box office because they dominate in international revenue

2010s: Studio's are so risk adverse, only adaptations from other media with built in audiences (pre-branded) are being considered.



Product Placement and Hollywood

~voices.yahoo.com

The cost of making a feature film, television film or television series has skyrocketed and Hollywood is in search of ways to offset those costs. Enter the brand marketing/product placement specialist whose job is to broker a lucrative deal between a well known brand with a studio or production company. Companies such as Pepsi, Kellogg's, and General Motors will pay high fees to insure that their products are visible. Just look at what happened when Pontiac introduced their new car, the Solstice, on The Apprentice last season on NBC - they sold their entire first year production on the car within a 4 hour period.

HISTORY OF COMPLIANCE:

Scripts can often be the first casualty in Hollywood's theatre of war

Hollywood film-makers have frequently changed plot lines, altered history and amended scripts at the request of the Pentagon, according to recently released military documents. Producers and directors have often agreed to changes in order to gain access to expensive military hardware or to be able to film on military property. On many occasions films have been changed so that the US armed forces are shown in a more heroic fashion. Film companies agree to the changes because doing so saves them millions in production costs. If film-makers do not agree to alterations, assistance is withheld. Pentagon Approved: Armageddon, Air Force One, The Jackal, Pearl Harbour, Top Gun. Pentagon: Forrest Gump, The Thin Red Line, Apocalypse Now, and Platoon. *~theguardian.com*

Lights, Camera, Covert Action: The Deep Politics of Hollywood

Hollywood's longstanding and open relationship with the Pentagon is well known, but little of substance has been written about the more clandestine influences working through Hollywood in the post-9/11 world. The CIA in the mid-1990s began offering consultation and research assistance to producers. The spooks have even created a new full-time position: Public affairs liaison to Hollywood. *~Centre for Global Research, The Guardian*

- In 1996 the CIA, hired Chase Brandon, a cousin of Tommy Lee Jones and a 26-year veteran paramilitary officer with experience "all over Latin America" as liaison. Brandon told the press, "We hate to see ugly imagery of us in television and films."
- The proliferation of pro-American films and television programs might be described as a cynical mind control operation, a psyop. John Rendon, a "strategic communications" firm hired by the Pentagon (at \$100,000 a month) in the war on terrorism, describes himself as "an information warrior and a perception manager."
- Hollywood and the White House held numerous meetings from October to December, 2001. On 10/17, in response to 9/11, the White House announced the formation of its "**Arts and Entertainment Task Force**," and by November, Jack Valenti had assumed leadership of Hollywood's new role in the 'War on Terror'.
- As a direct result of meetings, Congress sought advice from Hollywood insiders on how to shape an effective wartime message to America and to the world. In November 2001, John Romano, writer-producer of the popular TV series Third Watch, advised the House International Relations Committee that the content of Hollywood productions was a key part of shaping foreign perceptions of America
- In November, 2001, Karl Rove and several dozen studio executives met in Beverly Hills to discuss the war on terrorism. "It's important to hear what Hollywood has on its mind." Actor Tom Cruise met with CIA officials to discuss ways of burnishing the agency's image in the upcoming Mission: Impossible 3.
- A variety of agencies have liaison offices in Hollywood today: FBI, NASA, Secret Service
- On the set 2003 thriller The Recruit, starring Al Pacino, a CIA agent was on set for the duration of the shoot under the guise of a consultant, but that his real job was to misdirect the filmmakers: "We didn't want Hollywood getting too close to the truth,"
- **Jennifer Garner**, TV show 'Alias' star, made an unpaid recruitment video for the CIA
- In 2000, it emerged that the White House's drug war officers had spent tens of millions of dollars paying the major US networks to inject anti-drug plots into the scripts of primetime series such as ER, The Practice, Sabrina the Teenage Witch and Chicago Hope. Despite criticism for this blatant propagandizing, the government continued to employ this method of spreading its message on drugs.

"There's a symbiosis between the CIA and Hollywood" ~ Bob Baer, Ex CIA

The Sun Valley Meetings are annual get-togethers in Idaho in which several hundred of the biggest names in American media –including every major Hollywood studio executive– convene to discuss collective media strategy for the coming year. Against the idyllic backdrop of expansive golf courses, pine forests and clear fishing lakes, deals are struck, contracts are signed, and the face of the American media is quietly altered. The press has yet to be granted permission to report on these corporate media gatherings and so the exact nature of what is discussed at the events has never been publicly disclosed. It is known that CIA head George Tenet was keynote speaker at Sun Valley in 2003 & 2005

WORLD WAR III WILL BE A GLOBAL INFORMATION WAR WITH NO DIVISION BETWEEN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PARTICIPATION. ~M. MCLUHAN

Meet Hollywood's Cop



Kyle Chandler (I)

Actor | Producer | Director

 Top 5000

Kyle Chandler grew up in the small town of Social Circle, Georgia (population 4,500). On the family farm, the only TV station they got was Ted Turner's TBS. Kyle would watch old movies, go out and perform the roles in his backyard. As a drama major at the University of Georgia, Kyle met and was signed by an ABC scout in a 1988 talent search. Kyle ... See full bio »

The Wolf of Wall Street:	Agent Patrick Denham (FBI)
Zero Dark Thirty:	Joseph Bradley (CIA Boss)
Argo:	Hamilton Jordan (CIA Boss)

History lessons, with popcorn, for America's undergrads

Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. said, "The fact that film has been the most potent vehicle of the American imagination suggests all the more strongly that movies have something to tell us, not just about the surfaces but about the mysteries of American life." Today's movies also tell us a lot about the changing nature of teaching.

As long-form journalism retreats, newspapers and television networks consolidate bureaus and the attention span for international news shrinks, the movies are a critical rough draft of history that affects higher education. It is imperative that Hollywood's best pictures continue to get these stories right, because they lay the groundwork for the next generation's understanding of the world and help inform a basic narrative of our politics and policies for years to come. ~ Zach Messitte is President of Ripon College, WI

Counterpoint: Nicolas Meyers letter to LA times

Anyway, the best novels and movies frequently inspire people to learn the facts. After experiencing the visceral pleasure a movie provides, curiosity may be piqued. It needn't diminish our pleasure or invalidate our feelings to learn after the fact that the Americans' narrow escape from Iran at the end of ["Argo"](#) was not the nip-and-tuck affair depicted in the film. But weren't we on the edge of our seats watching it? Such exaggerations need not diminish our enjoyment of the fictions they inspired.

Art serves many purposes, but among these, surely, is escape from reality. There ought to be room for fantasy in our lives. Stories, even when they aspire to what we term "realism," are attempts to improve on reality, to sharpen and organize it, if nothing else. Goodness knows, we cannot escape "reality," but movies ought to be entitled to give us a break from it now and then without the fact-checkers piling on.

Propaganda is just culture in action ~Jacque Ellul

Argo 2012

Director: Ben Affleck

Writers: From CIA agent Tony Mendez's book "The Master of Disguise"

Stars: Ben Affleck, Bryan Cranston, John Goodman

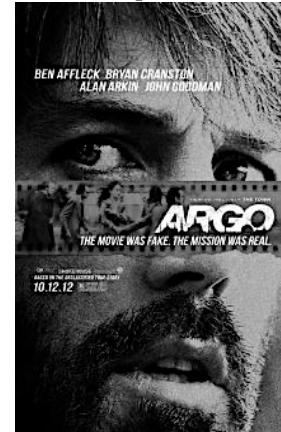
Synopsis: Acting under the cover of a Hollywood producer scouting a location for a science fiction film, a CIA agent launches a dangerous operation to rescue 6 Americans in Tehran during the U.S. hostage crisis in Iran in 1980.

Awards

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Oscar 2013 - Best Picture, Editing Budget: \$44.5million

Oscar 2013 - Best Writing, Adapted Gross: \$232,019,448



Timing of US Release: Oct. 12, 2012

Arrives prior to the US presidential election, and in the midst of an all-out propaganda campaign to demonize Iran and take America to war. Romney challenges Obama over Iran in their 3rd debate. This film, under the guise of a thriller, exacerbates anti-Iranian feeling in America and elsewhere and gives the CIA a positive portrayal in light of numerous allegations of crime by Wikileaks.

Reviews

"This is one of those films that depend on your not thinking much about it; for as soon as you reflect on what's happening rather than being swept up in the narrative flow, there doesn't seem much to it aside from the skill with which suspense is maintained despite the fact that you know how it ends. That is the virtue of an films like this; it doesn't linger in the memory and provoke afterthoughts."

~Stanley Fish

History Fact Check

- The Americans never resisted the idea of playing a film crew, In fact, the "house guests" chose that cover story themselves, from a group of three options the CIA had prepared.
- No "Script" was ever purchased by the CIA. No "Storyboards" were ever made
- They were not almost lynched by a mob of crazy Iranians in Tehran's Grand Bazaar
- There was no last-minute cancellation of the group's tickets by the Carter administration.
- The group underwent no interrogation at the airport about their imaginary movie, nor were they detained at the gate while a their phony office in Burbank was telephoned
- There was no last-second chase on the runway of Mehrabad Airport, with wild-eyed, bearded militants with Kalashnikovs trying to shoot out the tires of a Swissair jet.
- Jimmy Carter has even acknowledged that "90% of the contribution to the ideas and the consummation of the plan was Canadian"- while 'Argo' gives almost full credit to the CIA
- Ben Affleck's character in the film was only in Tehran a day and a half and the real hero was Ken Taylor, the Canadian ambassador who orchestrated the entire process."

One of the actual diplomats, Mark Lijek, noted that the CIA's fake movie "cover story was never tested and in some ways proved irrelevant to the escape." The departure of the 6 Americans from Tehran was actually uneventful. **"The truth is the immigration officers barely looked at us"**

Big Ben Affleck chimes in: "It's OK to embellish, it's OK to compress, as long as you don't fundamentally change the nature of the story and of what happened," "I go to pains to contextualize it and to try to be even-handed in a way that just means we're taking a cold, hard look at the facts." He told *Rolling Stone* that, when conceiving his directorial approach, he knew he "absolutely had to preserve the central integrity and truth of the story."

Protagonist Portrayal: Mendez is glorified as a cool headed mastermind and a maverick. He bucks his superiors who don't understanding his creativity. He's a regular guy doing a dirty job in a dangerous world... (*and also works out and emotes with his beard*)

Compliance In Art

~imdb.com, policymic.com

- Ben Affleck has stated that the production was granted unprecedented access to the CIA's actual headquarters, both for interiors and exteriors, thanks to Mendez.
- The main person who pushed the story to be published was the former CIA director George Tenet who persuaded Tony Mendez to write his account of the mission.
- All Iranian characters are depicted as ethnic stereotypes. Violent and irrational
- "Argo" provides a myopic representation of both Iranians and their revolution, ignoring their hospitable side and desire for some degree of justice from the US
- The film's true crime, its deliberate exploitation of "its basis in history and its mode of detailed realism to create something that is entirely mythological." Not only is it "a trite cavalcade of action-movie clichés and expository dialogue," but "also a **propaganda movie in the truest sense, one that claims to be innocent of all ideology.**"
- In an interview with *The Huffington Post*, Affleck went so far as to say, "I tried to make a movie that is absolutely just factual. And that's another reason why I tried to be as true to the story as possible. I didn't want it to be politicized internationally or domestically in a partisan way. I just wanted to tell a story that was about the facts as I understood them."
- For Affleck, these facts apparently don't include understanding *why* the American Embassy in Tehran was overrun and occupied on November 4, 1979. "There was no rhyme or reason to this action," Affleck has insisted, claiming that the takeover "wasn't about us," Wrong, Ben. One reason was the fear of another CIA-engineered coup d'etat like the one perpetrated in 1953 from the very same Embassy.
- Another reason was the admission of the deposed Shah into the United States for medical treatment and asylum rather than extradition to Iran to face charges

"Argo" is an exercise in American exceptionalism - the most dangerous fiction that permeates our entire society and sense of identity. It reinvents history in order to mine a tale of triumph from an unmitigated defeat. The hostage crisis, which lasted 444 days and destroyed an American presidency, was a failure and an embarrassment. The US government and media has spent the 30 years tirelessly exacting revenge on Iran for it.

BEN AFFLECK'S 'ARGO' BAGGED \$6.21 MILLION IN TAXPAYER MONEY

A new report by the Government Accountability Institute has discovered that, according to the California Film Commission, Argo, received \$6.21 million in California film tax credits.

AFTERMATH

Hostages: 14 were released early. The 52 remaining hostages endured 444 days of captivity until their release January 20, 1981. **3 of the hostages were operatives of the CIA**

Ill-fated secret rescue mission: 8 U.S. servicemen were killed when a helicopter and a transport plane collided during a failed attempt to rescue the hostages in April 1980.

Carter Presidency tarnished and ruined. Reagan and the conservative backlash awaited in the 80s. The hostages were released on the day of Reagan's Inauguration. Its now known his campaign had secret negotiations with Iran in the Fall of 1980 with his victory apparent.

~New Reports Say 1980 Reagan Campaign Tried to Delay Hostage Release ~NY Times
The Iraq invasion of Iran occurred less than a year after the embassy employees were taken hostage. The US and Britain backed Saddam Hussein in the war, giving Iraq arms, money, satellite intelligence, and even chemical & bio-weapon precursors. 90 US military advisors supported Iraqi forces and helped pick targets for Iraqi missile attacks. ~globalpolicy.org

"You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war." ~William Randolph Hearst

***The Fifth Estate* 2013**

Director: Bill Condon

Writers: Daniel Domscheit-Berg (Book "Inside Wikileaks"), Josh Singer (Screenplay)

Stars: Benedict Cumberbatch, Daniel Brühl,

Synopsis: A dramatic thriller based on real events that reveals the quest to expose the deceptions and corruptions of power that turned an Internet upstart into the 21st century's most fiercely debated organization.

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Awards

Budget: 28 million

None

Gross 3.3 Million



Timing of US Release: Oct. 13th 2013

Chelsea Manning sentence of 35 years delivered in August 2013. Pvt. Manning's upcoming appeal and request for a presidential pardon are pending. Manning to awarded 2014 Sam Adams Award for Integrity in Intelligence on Wed. 2/19. NSA spying revelation dominate summer and fall headlines. Julian Assange has been detained without charge in the Ecuadorian Embassy for over 3 years but Wikileaks continues to operate.

Reviews

"A Hollywood Cartoon of Julian Assange ... the film equivalent of celebrity journalism."
"Simply a dreary, tedious slog through a by-the-numbers, episodic morass ... ultimately vaguely insulting" ~*The Atlantic Wire*

History Fact Check

~WikiLeaks Public Response

- Although THE FIFTH ESTATE purports to be about Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, the film was made without the involvement of WikiLeaks or any of its staff
- THE FIFTH ESTATE falsely implies that WikiLeaks harmed 2,000 US informants. Not even the US government alleges that WikiLeaks caused harm to a single person.
- But despite spending millions of dollars over three years in preparation for the trial of Private Manning, the US government was unable to present any evidence of anyone coming to harm as a consequence of the WikiLeaks publications.
- Julian was never in a cult and does not dye his hair white
- An FBI informant was placed within the group though this is ridiculed in the film
- Assange has not been charged with a crime in Sweden or any other state
- The film inserts a "Daniel Domscheit-Berg" into the story for the events of 2010, during which Collateral Murder, War Logs & Cablegate were released. The real Berg was not present for any of these. The character 'Daniel' is almost entirely fictitious.
- All of the key releases of US government documents in 2010 happened after his departure from the group. He finalized his own departure from WikiLeaks in September 2010 with the acts of sabotage against WikiLeaks servers hinted at (but perversely celebrated) in the film, making off with leaked documents which included evidence of women and children being massacred in Afghanistan by US forces. He claims to have destroyed them.
- Between them, Daniel Berg and the Guardian journalist David Leigh brought about the unredacted publication of Cablegate in September 2011, but then falsely attempted to attribute the incident to WikiLeaks, a fiction the movie repeats.

Only puny secrets need protection.

Big discoveries are protected by public incredulity ~Marshall McLuhan

Protagonist Portrayal

Julian Assange is made to look petty, arrogant, maniacal and self-absorbed. The film's actual protagonist is Daniel Berg, the disgruntled volunteer released from Wikileaks. He is played very favorably as well meaning, thoughtful and level headed. He is given a love interest to build sympathy while Julian is shown as a rapacious flirt and as interfering with their love

Compliance In Art

THE FIFTH ESTATE is careful to avoid most criticism of US foreign policy actually revealed by WikiLeaks. The film covers 2010, but almost none of the evidence WikiLeaks published that year was of serious abuses within the US military and the State Department. This film does not occur in a historical vacuum, but appears in the context of ongoing efforts to bring a criminal prosecution against WikiLeaks and Assange for exposing the US activities

EXCERPTS FROM ASSANGE LETTER TO BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH....

.....There are dozens of positive books about WikiLeaks, but Dreamworks decided to base its script only on the most toxic. So toxic is the first book selected, that it is distributed to US military bases as a mechanism to discourage military personnel from communicating with us. Its author is publicly known to be involved in the production in an ongoing capacity.

.....Dreamworks' second rights purchase was written by people we have had a bitter contractual dispute with for years, whose hostility is well known. Neither of these two books were the first to be published and there are many independent authors who have written positive or neutral books, all of whom Dreamworks ignored.

.....Dreamworks is an extremely wealthy organization, with ties to powerful interests in the US government. I must therefore question the choices and motives behind it: the opportunism, fears and mundanity; the unwritten rules of film financing and distribution ...You will be used as a hired gun, to assume the appearance of the truth in order to assassinate it. To present me as someone morally compromised and to place me in a falsified history. To create a work, not of fiction, but of debased truth.

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH INTERVIEWED ~VOGUE

Benedict Cumberbatch, stated that director Bill Condon wanted him to play Julian Assange as an "antisocial megalomaniac." Cumberbatch realized that some of Assange's fears were justified. "On a lot of the stage direction, we clashed because Bill did seem to be setting him up as a antisocial maniac."



BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY WIKILEAKS

1. The Afghanistan War Diaries exposed the use of secret "kill lists," assassination squads, and dramatically shifted perception of the occupation and significantly reduced support for the war
2. The Iraq War Logs showed direct US complicity in torture carried out by Iraqi authorities, enabling research and advocacy by human rights groups such as Amnesty International and efforts to obtain justice for the victims of torture and killing. They showed the true civilian death toll of the war, kept secret by the US military.
3. Cablegate has produced more news stories than any single leak in history. For years after the world has been awash with revelations. The BBC, the New York Times and even the US government during the trial of Private Manning, have all argued that the publication of Cablegate helped to trigger revolutions in Tunisia and across the Middle East. One cable showed US troops carrying out war crimes with impunity, triggering the Iraq government's decision to remove legal immunity from prosecution for US troops in Iraq, which directly led to the US withdrawal from Iraq
4. WikiLeaks has formed a model for how journalism can be done, and its been copied by media organizations all over the world, dragging traditional news orgs into the 21st Century

***Wolf of Wall Street* 2013**

Director: Martin Scorsese

Writers: Terence Winter (screenplay), Jordan Belfort (book)

Stars: Leonardo DiCaprio, Jonah Hill, Margot Robbie

Synopsis: Based on the true story of Jordan Belfort, from his rise to a wealthy stockbroker living the high life to his fall involving crime, corruption and the federal government.

Awards \$\$\$\$\$

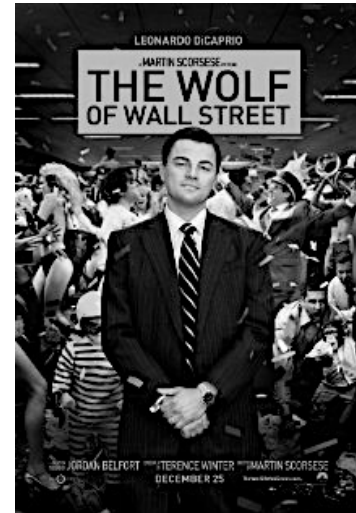
Oscar Nominated: Budget: \$100,000,000 -estimate

Best Picture, Best Director Gross: \$107,896,588 (USA)

Best Actor: Leonardo DiCaprio (7 February 2014)

Best Writing, Adapted Screenplay

AFI - Movie of the Year



Timing of US Release: Dec. 25, 2013

The only significance to the timing of this release is to be well positioned for Oscar season.

Reviews

The Los Angeles Times warns moviegoers that the film will make them hate “those Wall Street high rollers” At Rolling Stone, “Scorsese is jabbing hard at America’s jackpot culture.” TIME’s own Richard Corliss calls the movie out for “bathing in amorality until it drowns,” turning crime into comedy by failing to take into account the scope of the crimes it portrays.

History Fact Check

- The outlandish event that take place during film are largely true by most accounts
- The film skipped over the devastation of those who lost money to Belfort.
- Belfort was ordered to pay \$110.4 million in restitution to victims, by handing over 50% of his gross income. He has so far paid only \$11.6 million. Robert Nardoza, a spokesman for the US Attorney for the Eastern District, said prosecutors had filed a motion placing Belfort in default, and are negotiating with his lawyers
- When their days of reckoning came, Mr. Belfort and Mr. Porush didn’t stand up against law enforcement, but rather caved, quickly agreeing to cooperate against virtually everyone close to them. Belfort cried before federal agents
- Though Belfort claims in his book and in the film that he only took from the wealthy, the New York Times reports that many small business owners are still trying to recover financially from Belfort’s scheme. Thousands of victims who lost hundreds of millions of dollars that they never will be repaid.
- Victim Bob Shearin says, “His Depiction in this movie is annoying and disturbing, because it makes him more of a mythical figure and skips the reality of what he is.”
- A scathing portrait from an article in Forbes during the height of Stratford Oakmont drew job applicants in droves to the firm seeking the 100,000 commissions
- No one in his office called him the “Wolf” - the name was made up by Belfort himself
- Jordan's books, The Wolf of Wall Street and Catching the Wolf of Wall Street, netted him a \$1 million advance from Random House. He also earned \$1 million for the film rights. He claims to have turned over 100% of the proceeds ~TheDailyBeast.com
- 'Wolf of Wall Street' Becomes Martin Scorsese's Top-Grossing Film
- First major film in America to only be released digitally to theaters. No film prints.

The difference between right and wrong is getting caught – Jordan Belfort

Compliance In Art

- In real life, Belfort says the model for his get-rich-quick, and by-any-means greedy behavior was Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street* (1987)
- DiCaprio was obsessed with playing Jordan Belfort since getting a hold of the book in 2007, He has been worked on turning the tale of Belfort into a film for 7 years
- Leonardo DiCaprio says that he and Martin Scorsese were able to 'push the envelope' with their depiction of over-the-top sexual acts in "Wolf" primarily because the production was financed independently, and not by any major studio.
- This is the first film for producers Riza Aziz and Joey McFarland under their Red Granite banner. They decided to finance this film as a challenge, since no studio was willing to finance an explicit, sexually laced film with an expensive budget. Aziz and McFarland were formerly investment bankers, the bulk of the funding comes from their investors contacts, mostly in the Middle East.
- As a motivational speaker, he is sometimes paid more than \$30,000 a speech. Leonardo DiCaprio cut a short video to help promote his speaking business, ending the video by saying, "Jordan stands as a shining example of the transformative qualities of ambition and hard work, and in that regard, he is a true motivator."

REVIEWS & INSIGHT: Does The Wolf of Wall Street Glorify Greed or Not?

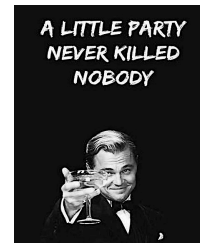
Time: Is The Wolf of Wall Street a critique of that culture or a celebration of it? When Scorsese lingers on the curves of a suit or a car or a nameless woman, is the audience meant to feel their blood boil with anger or race with lust? The camera loves the things that the characters love without sufficiently separating the artist's desires from the character's desire - when greed is this good, amorality is immorality. When does a movie about creepy macho excess, turns into creepy macho excess?

Boston Globe: "While depicting rampant misogyny among the film's male characters, the filmmaker is at least a participant-observer for failing to treat its female characters as much more than playthings."

Wall Street Journal: "Any meaningful perspective on the greed-fest of the period is obscured by the gleefulness of the depiction."

New Yorker: "It's meant to be an exposé of disgusting, obscene behavior, but it's made in such an exultant style that it becomes an example of disgusting, obscene filmmaking"

Christina McDowell, daughter of an Accomplice: "Did you think about the cultural message you'd be sending when you decided to make this film? You have successfully aligned yourself with an accomplished criminal, a guy who still hasn't made full restitution to his victims, exacerbating our national obsession with wealth and status and glorifying greed and psychopathic behavior."



The Real Belfort Story Missing From 'Wolf' Movie ~NY Times

Joel Cohen, a former federal prosecutor who worked on Belfort case

When we debriefed him, Mr. Belfort described how he awoke virtually every day thinking of new ways to defraud others. Now, Mr. Belfort sells himself as someone whom others should pay to receive variants of the same falsehoods he trained others to use against his victims. Some might think the movie's ending is a cute conceit: putting the artist and his muse together on a stage for a final scene. To his victims, it is a beyond an insult. And for anyone who is enticed to pay Mr. Belfort to hear his recordings, it aids and abets this unrepentant character in possibly duping others yet again. Should it be surprising that following the release of the movie, Mr. Belfort is reportedly negotiating to host a reality-TV show? "The Wolf of Wall Street" creators can possibly justify excluding victims from their story, but not while they literally give the final scene to the real Jordan Belfort.

Historical Context

~www.independent-stock-investing.com



HIGHLIGHTS

Stock Market Crash of 1929: it's interesting to note that while the 1929 crash was a major historical event, it was only a tiny blip in the index compared to the levels the Dow is trading at today: 400 range then, 10,000+ range today.

Stock Market Crash of 1987: The Dow first broke the 2,000 mark. The crash of 1987 resulted in a steep fall in the index, but the recovery was rapid.

The 1990s boom: the dot com era in the 90s blew the Dow through the proverbial roof.... the Dow almost touched 12,000.

The 2000-2010 see-saw: The dot com crash saw a quick recovery with the Dow breaking the 12,000 mark. The 2008 crisis sent the Dow into a tail-spin. However, by 2010 the Dow showed tremendous resilience closing over the 11,000 mark.

During the 1990s corporate profits rose 108%, supporting an S&P 500 Index increase of 224%. Who gained? After nearly two decades of real wage declines, workers' pay rose 28% in the 1990s. Meanwhile, CEO pay has risen 443%. CEO total compensation has skyrocketed, from an average of \$2 million in 1990 to \$10.6 million in 1998.

Executive Crime: The Top 10 executive earners from the decade include many who have reaped their colossal rewards while leading companies involved in illegal behavior, worker exploitation, the marketing of killer products or other less-than-noble activities.

THE EVENTS IN *THE WOLF OF WALL STREET* MOVIE TOOK PLACE DURING THE LATE 1980s AND EARLY 1990s WHEN JORDAN BELFORT & DANNY PORUSH FOUNDED THE BROKERAGE FIRM STRATTON OAKMONT. THEY USED AGGRESSIVE SALES TACTICS TO MARKET THINLY TRADED CHEAP STOCKS THAT TRADE "OVER THE COUNTER" RATHER THAN ON AN EXCHANGE – A PUMP AND DUMP SCHEME. THE SECURITIES FRAUD AND MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST THE FIRM INVOLVED COMPANIES THAT STRATTON OAKMONT HELPED RAISE MONEY FOR IN PUBLIC STOCK OFFERINGS FROM 1990 TO 1997. ~NYTIMES.COM

Final Thoughts

The idea that the FBI and the SEC need to do a more rigorous job of keeping sleazy drug-addled deviants from posing as real stock brokers and investment advisers is the most comfortable possible reform proposal for the real Titans of Finance, most of whom are perfectly respectable people with respectable accents and real degrees from prestigious universities. You have to rein them in not with exciting wiretaps but with boring regulations on leverage and liquidity. And this doesn't even begin to touch the larger questions around the financialization of the economy. Endlessly retelling stories about the lowest-rent and most egregious frauds around ultimately becomes a barrier to understanding. Scumbags like the guys in the movie don't get invitations to the White House. But its the guys who do, you should be worrying about. ~NY Times

TPP UPDATE

Crony Hollywood really wants the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement....

SOPA, PIPA, ACTA, CISPA, the freedom of the Internet is under assault from crony industry and governments. It is about restricting innovators and protecting dinosaur business models. Hollywood knows they may not survive in the 21st century. But they still have a lot of money and with it a lot of political influence. They desperately want the TPP and the expansion of copyright to go through. They don't care that it will stifle innovation and make the world a worse place. Hollywood has decided to use the state to protect them from the public rather than innovate.

~www.againstcronycapitalism.org

A SCREENWRITING TEACHER ONCE SAID: GREAT FILM IS WHEN YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE THE INTENTION OF THE MAKER. KUBRICK SAYS THE OPPOSITE

ACTIONS & SOLUTIONS

Awareness of manipulation is the first step toward liberty. Mastery is the second.

Websites

smellofpopcorn.com – Film commentary and critique
hollywoodbranded.com: Product placement services provider
historyvshollywood.com: Fact checking films with historical content
laughtears.com: All of Gerry Fialka's events about town
imdb.com – for all information about movies, actors, directors, crew
boxofficemojo.com – Stats, numbers and industry news
rottentomatoes.com – Agragate of critical and audience opinion
thedissolve.com – brainy film criticism



Narrative Films

A Face in the Crowd, 1957, Elia Kazan
Battle of Algiers, 1966, Gillo Pontecorvo
Medium Cool, 1969, Haskell Wexler
I am Cuba, 1964, Mikhail Kalatozev
Wag the Dog, 1997, Barry Levinson
Wild in the Streets, 1968, Barry Shear
The Strawberry Statement, 1970
The Front, 1976, featuring Woody Allen

Bob Roberts, 1992, Tim Robbins
The Player, 1993, Robert Altman
Parallax View, 1974, Alan J. Pakula
Network, 1976, Sidney Lumet
Syriana, 2005, Stephen Gaghan
In the Loop, 2009, Armando Iannucci
Underground: The Julian Assange Story
Tribulation 99, 1991, Craig Baldwin

Documentary Films

Berkeley in the 60s, 1990, Mark Kitchell
The Act of Killing, 2012, Josh Oppenheimer
This Film is not yet Rated, 2005, Kirby Dick
Winter Soldier, 1972, featuring John Kerry
Harlan County USA, 1976, Barbara Kopple
Any film by Emile de Antonio or Chris Marker

Some Government Sponsors Ones

Hurt Locker, Zero Dark Thirty,
Act of Valor, Red Dawn, Green Berets
Pearl Harbor, Armaggedon, Top Gun
Why We Fight, Lone Survivor, 300
Air Force One, Black Hawk Down
Patton, Robo-Cop, Rambo II, III

Books

Film as a Subversive Art, 1974, Amos Vogel
Finnegans Wake, 1939, James Joyce
What makes Sammy run, 1950, Bud Schulberg
Easy Riders, Raging Bulls, 1998, Peter Biskind
FBI and the Movies, 2006, Bob Herzberg
Take Today, The Executive as Drop out, 1972, M. McLuhan
4 arguments for the Elimination of TV, 1974, Jerry Mander



Activist History Quiz “Do you know your history?”

Who was allegedly fired from ‘One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest’ for working on a Black Panther film?